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THE GARDEN CALENDAR

A radio discussion by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour. Broadcast by a network of 50 associate NBC radio stations, Monday, March 2, 1936.

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Hello folks. I have a letter that I want to read to you today, it is from a lady in Ohio. Here it is:

"I am just listening to your talk on growing vegetables but I am not so interested in this as in flowers. Couldn't you arrange to have some one give flower garden talks on the Farm and Home Hour? I am sure there are a lot of women like myself who know very little about gardening but enjoy doing it. Will not you give this your attention or tell me of programs of this kind on the air?"

It so happens that I have a series of talks on the flower garden and the improvement of our home surroundings all mapped out and I have just been waiting for the weather conditions to improve a trifle throughout the central and mid-northern sections of the country before I started on this series. So you folks who are most interested in flowers will be remembered in the near future. Today I have a little message for the folks who live on farms, and those who have large town or city lots, regarding the growing of small fruits for home use. How often you have heard some one remark, "I saw the finest strawberries in the market this morning," or "Mrs. Brown was making strawberry preserves today, the Brown's have the most wonderful berries in their garden," and other remarks like these that have a note of envy and wistful longing for this or that nice fruit in its season.

Strawberries, raspberries, blackberries and dewberries are our principal small fruits. Of these the strawberry is the only one that is adapted for growing in all parts of the country. The blackberry in one or more of its forms more can be grown throughout the greater part of the country, while the raspberry is limited as to regions where it will succeed.

This is the second of March and it will very soon be time for planting the various small fruits in most sections, and so I want to give you a few suggestions. First as to strawberries. A bed of strawberries 20 feet in width, that is 5 or 6 rows, and 60 to 80 feet in length will supply all of the berries that the average sized family will require during the ripening season and plenty for preserves and canning. Incidentally strawberries are very fine when canned with rhubarb. In the extreme southern sections strawberries should be planted during the late summer or early fall but spring planting is preferable for the north central and northern sections. I believe it pays to get your plants from some nursery or from a plant grower of established reputation rather than to simply get plants of unknown variety from some neighbor.

In selecting varieties of strawberries, it all depends upon where you are located. I would suggest that you be guided in your choice of varieties by the advice of the man from whom you buy your plants. Generally speaking I would recommend Klondike and Missionary for Florida and the Gulf Coast; Blakemore, Klondike and Missionary for the Cotton Belt; Howard 17, Dorsett and Fairfax for the north central and eastern sections; and for the extreme northern part of the

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United States I would suggest Howard 17, Dunlap, Aroma and Progressive, the latter being an everbearer. We do not ordinarily recommend planting the Progressive, Mastodon, or in fact any of the everbearers for locations much south of the Great Lakes region and these varieties are at their best in Wisconsin and the adjoining States.

Raspberries are more limited in their range of climatic adaptability and I would not recommend planting them in the south, except possibly in the Piedmont section as far south as northern Georgia. The Van Fleet, a rather small red variety is adapted for growing a little further south than other varieties although we have a new variety named Potomac that appears to have a wide climatic adaptability.

Blackberries, Loganberries and Dewberries are all adapted for planting in the Southern States and recently a new berry has been introduced called the Boysen Berry. The Lucretia has been the leading dewberry for many years but lately the Young, or Youngberry, has been commanding attention. The Youngberry is a form of dewberry and the fruits are rather large. It is claimed that the fruits of the Boysenberry are double the size of the Youngberry and about ten days later and so extending the picking season.

Dewberries have a tendency to winterkill in the northern sections and for that reason blackberries are most universally planted in the sections where zero or sub-zero weather may be expected. There are a great many varieties of blackberries and the selection of varieties is very much of a local problem. I presume that the Lawton, McDonald and Snyder are the most universally planted.

There are two points to be observed when you are making a planting of any of these small fruits. The first is to plant them on good land where berries have not been grown for at least a number of years and on land that is not filled with weed seeds. The second point is to get plants that are clean and which are not diseased. In the case of raspberries and blackberries, crown gall, a disease that causes corky knots to form on the roots, is very troublesome. Certain nurserymen guarantee their plants to be free from crown gall and other root diseases.